

Message Text

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DEPARTMENT PASS OAU COLLECTIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, PORG, MA, US

SUBJ: COMMENTS ON PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA'S SPEECH AT OAU SUMMIT

1. SUMMARY: RATSIRAKA'S JULY 19 SPEECH AT KHARTOUM IS HIS STRONGEST AND MOST BIASED PUBLIC STATEMENT TO DATE JUSTIFYING SOVIET INTERVENTION ON AFRICA. REMARKS ON REUNION DEPART FROM HIS USUAL INCLINATION NOT TO DIRECTLY AFFRONT FRANCE. TONE AND CONTENT OF SPEECH, INCLUDING DENUNCIATION OF MOROCCO'S "IMPERIAL DESIGNS," AND HIS PLEADING FOR AN ALIGNMENT OF AFRICA WITH THE SOCIALIST WORLD, SEEM INTENDED TO CLAIM A ROLE FOR HIM AS PROMINENT FIGURE AMONG PROGRESSIVE AFRICAN STATESMEN. THEY COULD ALSO RESULT FROM HIS RECENT TRIP TO THE USSR. END SUMMARY.

2. JULY 21 OFFICIAL PRESS BULLETIN CARRIES SUMMARY AND EXCERPTS RATSIRAKA'S SPEECH AS PROVIDED BY ALGERIAN PRESS SERVICE.

3. SPEECH IS NOTEWORTHY NOT ONLY FOR WHAT IT SAYS BUT HOW IT SAYS IT. CRITICISM OF THE WEST, WHICH
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WAS TO BE EXPECTED, IS ARTICULATED IN SCATHING AND SARCASTIC TERMS. SPEAKING OF WESTERN DESIGNS IN GENERAL AND THE PAN-AFRICAN FORCE IN PARTICULAR HE SAYS: "BRAINS AND SOFTWARE ARE IN WASHINGTON. HEADQUARTERS AND HARDWARE IN EUROPE WHICH FURNISHES TECHNOLOGY AND LOGISTICS. THE FUNDS COME FROM THE RICH REACTIONARY COUNTRIES OF THE THIRD WORLD, AND

THE CANNON FODDER FROM AFRICA."

4. CONVERSELY HE GOES TO GREAT LENGTH TO DEFEND RIGHTNESS OF SOVIET/CUBAN INTERVENTIONS, DANGERS OF WHICH ARE PURE INVENTION OF WESTERNERS TO JUSTIFY THEIR OWN ATTEMPTS TO MAINTAIN AND/OR REIMPOSE THEIR POLITICAL CONTROL IN AFRICA AND THEIR EXPLOITATION OF ITS NATURAL RESOURCES. "INDEPENDENT AFRICA IS FULLY ABLE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN ITS FRIENDS AND FOES....BETWEEN THE IMPERIALISTS AND ITS OBJECTIVE ALLIES." TO DEFEND THIS JUDGEMENT HE ADDS THE CAVEAT THAT "....IF BY CHANCE IT SHOULD BE PROVED THAT SOCIALIST COUNTRIES WISH TO COLONIZE AFRICA, THEN MADAGASCAR WOULD BE THE FIRST TO COMBAT SUCH AN ACTIVITY, AS IT WAS IN 1947."

5. SURPRISINGLY RATSIRAKA'S SPEECH TAKES ON FRANCE MORE DIRECTLY THAN HE HAS IN THE PAST. ALTHOUGH IT IS "EUROPE" THAT IS ATTACKED, RATHER THAN FRANCE, IN HIS WORDS ON THE PAN-AFRICAN FORCE, RATSIRAKA GOES OUT OF HIS WAY TO CITE REUNION AS A PROBLEM IN "DE-COLONIZATION" AND TO VOICE HIS CONCERN OVER PRESENCE OF FRENCH MILITARY FORCES AND "OMEGA" STATION IN THAT PART OF THE INDIAN OCEAN.

6. ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS AND IN SEVERAL WAYS RATSIRAKA
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COMES BACK TO THE IDEA THAT AFRICA MUST SIDE WITH ITS "OBJECTIVE ALLIES" THE SOCIALISTS IN ORDER TO ATTAIN REAL LIBERATION FOR ITSELF AND THE WHOLE WORLD. ".....CLASS CONFLICT (IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT) HAS MADE WORLD REVOLUTION INEVITABLE."
"...FROM THE PROGRESS OF POLITICAL DEMOCRACY WILL EMERGE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEMOCRACY. SOCIALISM WILL WIN AND WILL SAVE THE WORLD."

7. RATSIRAKA SPOKE AT LENGTH ON THE WESTERN SAHARA QUESTION, HARSHLY CRITICIZING MOROCCO'S PRETENSIONS TO "RECONSTITUTE A GREAT EMPIRE, STRETCHING FROM TANGIER TO TIMBUCTU, AND ALL THE WAY TO ST. LOUIS OF SENEGAL."

8. ON SUBJECT OF OAU RATSIRAKA MADE STRONG PITCH FOR IT TO CHANGE WITH THE TIMES SAYING IT MUST ACTIVELY PURSUE ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE TO COMPLEMENT POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE. HIS BRIEF LIP SERVICE TO AFRICAN UNITY AND OAU SOLIDARITY SOUNDED STRANGE IN CONTRAST TO THE BULK OF HIS SPEECH. THE WORD NON-ALIGNMENT DOES NOT APPEAR IN ACCOUNT OF

SPEECH WE HAVE.

9. COMMENT: PATSIRAKA OBVIOUSLY DID NOT PASS UP THIS CHANCE TO MAKE A BID FOR A PROMINENT ROLE AS SPOKESMAN FOR A PROGRESSIVE AFRICA. ALTHOUGH HIS APOLOGIA FOR SOVIET ACTIONS IN AFRICA WAS CAST IN TERMS OF THE HIGHEST OBJECTIVE PRINCIPLES, ONE CAN WONDER TO WHAT EXTENT IT RESULTED FROM HIS RECENT TRIP TO THE USSR. WE KNOW VERY LITTLE OF WHAT WAS DISCUSSED OR CONCLUDED ON THAT VISIT BUT IT MIGHT WELL HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN HIS DECISION TO SPEAK OUT SO CATEGORICALLY. IF WE LEARN MORE ABOUT SPECIFICS OF TRIP, IT MAY HELP US UNDERSTAND THE EXTENT TO WHICH RATSIRAKA, CONFIDENTIAL

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OUT OF CONVICTION OR OPPORTUNISM, WILL ACTUALLY BECOME THE ACTIVE COLLABORATOR OF THE SOVIET UNION HE APPEARS TO BE IN THIS SPEECH. BARRETT

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED.

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